A Blow at the Root:

OR

Jesus Christ stabbed in the House of his Friends.

Judas, *betrayest thou the Son of Man with a Kiss?* Luke xxii. 48.

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A Blow at the Root, &c.

1. WITHOUT *Holineſs no Man ſhall ſee the* LORD, ſhall ſee the Face of GOD in Glory. Nothing under Heaven can be more ſure than this: *For the Mouth of the* LORD *hath ſpoken it.* And tho' Heaven and Earth paſs away, yet his *Word ſhall not paſs away.* As well therefore might GOD fall from Heaven, as this Word fall to the Ground. No, it cannot be: None ſhall live with GOD, but he that now *lives to* GOD. None ſhall enjoy the Glory of GOD in Heaven, but he that bears the Image of GOD on Earth. None that is not ſaved from Sin here, can be ſaved from Hell hereafter. None can ſee the Kingdom of GOD above, unleſs the Kingdom of GOD be in him below. Whoſoever will reign with CHRIST in Heaven, muſt have CHRIST reigning in him on Earth. He muſt have *that Mind in him which was in* CHRIST, enabling him to *walk as* CHRIST *alſo walked.*

2. And yet as ſure as this is, and as clearly as it is taught in every Part of the Holy Scripture,

there is ſcarce one among all the Truths of GOD, which is leſs received by Men. It was indeed acknowledged in ſome Degree, even among the wiſer Heathens. Some among them allowed, that nothing would pleaſe GOD but the *ſancti receſſus Mentis, & incoctum generoſo pectus honeſto*; A virtuous, holy Mind, and an Heart deep dyed with generous Honeſty. But tho' they could not deny, yet how eaſily and effectually did they evade this? They fancied ſomething elſe would do as well: That ſome Rites or Ceremonies, ſome External Forms, or glorious Actions, would ſupply the Place of inward Holineſs. So the famous *Roman* entitles to future Happineſs, not only the Good and Virtuous, but all

Oh patriam pugnando vulnera paſſos,
Quique pie Vates, & Phœbo digna locuti;
Inventas aut qui vitam excoluêre per artes.

So to fight for their Country, to write good Verſes, or to invent uſeful Arts, was abundantly ſufficient, in the Judgment of the wiſeſt Heathens, to give Men a Place in Heaven!

3. But this would not paſs with modern *Romanists*. They deſpiſed ſuch groſs Imaginations. But tho' they did not allow theſe, they found out another Way to get to Heaven without Holineſs. In the Room of them they ſubſtituted Pennances, Pilgrimages, Praying to Saints and Angels: And, above all theſe, Maſſes for the Dead, Abſolution by a Prieſt, and Extreme Unction. And theſe ſatisfy the *Romaniſts* full as well as *Luſtrations* did the Heathens. Thouſands of them make no Manner of Doubt, but, by a diligent Uſe of theſe without any Holineſs at all, they ſhall *ſee the* LORD in Glory.

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4. However Proteſtants will not be ſatisfied thus: They know this Hope is no better than a Spider's Web. They are convinced, that whoever leans on this, leans on the Staff of a broken Reed. What then can they do? How ſhall they hope to ſee GOD without Holineſs? Why, by doing no Harm, doing Good, going to Church and Sacrament. And many Thouſands ſit down content with this, believing they are in the high Road to Heaven.

5. Yet many cannot reſt here. They look upon this as the very *Popery of Proteſtantiſm*. They well know, that altho' none can be a real Chriſtian, without carefully abſtaining from all Evil, uſing every Means of Grace at every Opportunity, and doing all poſſible Good to all Men: Yet a Man may go thus far, may do all this, and be but an Heathen ſtill. They know this Religion is too ſuperficial: It is but as it were Skin-deep. Therefore it is not Chriſtianity; for that lies in the Heart: It is, Worſhipping GOD in Spirit and in Truth. It is no other than *the Kingdom of* GOD *within us*: It is *the Life of* GOD in the Soul of Man. It is the Mind which was in CHRIST JESUS: It is *Righteouſneſs and Peace and Joy in the Holy Ghoſt*.

6. Beſides, they ſee that, be this Religion ſhallower or deeper, it does not ſtand on the right Foundation: Since *other Foundation* for true Religion *can no Man lay, than that which is laid, even* CHRIST JESUS: Since no one can have the Mind which was in CHRIST, 'till he is juſtified by his Blood; 'till he is forgiven and reconciled to GOD thro' the Redemption that is in JESUS CHRIST. And none can be juſtified, they are well aſſured, but by Faith, even Faith alone: Seeing *to him that*

that believeth on God *who juſtifieth the Ungodly, his Faith is counted to him for Righteouſneſs.*

7. What Evaſion now? What Way could *Satan* take to make all this Light of none Effect? What could be done when that grand Truth, By *Grace ye are ſaved thro' Faith*, was more and more generally received? What indeed but to perſuade the very Men who had received it, to *turn the Grace of* God *into Laſciviouſneſs?* To this End *Simon Magus appeared again, and taught* "That Christ "had *done*, as well as ſuffered, *all:* That *his* "*Righteouſneſs* being imputed to *us*, we need none "of *our own*: That ſeeing there was ſo much "Righteouſneſs and Holineſs *in Him*, there needs "no more *in us:* That to think we have any, or "to deſire or ſeek any, is To renounce Christ: "That from the Beginning to the End of Salva-"tion, all is *in* Christ, nothing *in Man*; and "that thoſe who teach otherwiſe are *legal* Preach-"ers, and know nothing of the *Goſpel.*"

8. This is indeed *a Blow at the Root*, the Root of all Holineſs, all true Religion. Hereby Christ is *ſtabbed in the Houſe of his Friends*, of thoſe who make the largeſt Profeſſions of loving and honouring Him: The whole Deſign of his Death, namely *to deſtroy the Works of the Devil*, being overthrown at a Stroke. For wherever this Doctrine is cordially received, it leaves no Place for Holineſs. It demoliſhes it from Top to Bottom; it deſtroys both Root and Branch. It effectually tears up all Deſire of it, all Endeavour after it. It forbids all ſuch Exhortations as might excite thoſe Deſires, or awaken thoſe Endeavours. Nay it makes Men afraid of Perſonal Holineſs, afraid of cheriſhing any Thought of it, or Motion toward it, leſt they

they ſhould deny the Faith, and reject CHRIST and his Righteouſneſs. So that inſtead of being *zealous of good Works*, they are a Stink in their Noſtrils. And they are infinitely more afraid of *the Works of* GOD, than of *the Works of the Devil.*

9. Here is Wiſdom! Tho' not the Wiſdom of the Saints, but Wiſdom from beneath. Here is the Maſter-piece of *Satan:* Farther than this he cannot go. Men are holy, without a Grain of Holineſs in them! Holy in CHRIST, however unholy in themſelves: They are *in* CHRIST, without one Jot of the Mind that was in CHRIST. In CHRIST, though their Nature is whole in them. They are *compleat in Him*, tho' they are *in themſelves* as proud, as vain, as covetous, as paſſionate as ever. It is enough: They may be unrighteous ſtill, ſeeing CHRIST has *fulfilled all Righteouſneſs!*

10. O ye ſimple Ones, *how long will ye love Simplicity?* How long will ye *ſeek Death in the Error of your Life? Know ye not*, whoever teacheth you otherwiſe, *that the Unrighteous ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of* GOD? *Be not deceived:* Altho' there are many lie in wait to deceive, and that under the fair Pretence of *exalting* CHRIST: A Pretence which the more eaſily ſteals upon *you*, becauſe *to you He is precious.* But as the LORD liveth, *Neither Fornicators, nor Idolaters, nor Adulterers, nor Effeminate, nor Sodomites, nor Thieves, nor Covetous, nor Drunkards, nor Revilers, nor Extortioners, ſhall inherit the Kingdom of* GOD. *Such* indeed *were ſome of you. But ye are waſhed, but ye are ſanctified*, as well as *juſtified, in the Name of the* LORD JESUS, *by the Spirit of our* GOD. You are really changed: You are not only *accounted* but actually *made Righteous. The Law*, the inward Power, *of the Spirit of Life*

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in CHRIST JESUS, *hath made* you *free*, really, actually free, *from the Law or Power of Sin and Death.* This is Liberty, true Gospel Liberty, experienced by every Believer: Not Freedom from the Law of GOD, or the Works of GOD, but from the Law of Sin, and the Works of the Devil. See that ye *ſtand faſt in* this real, not imaginary *Liberty, wherewith* CHRIST *hath made you free.* And take heed ye *be not intangled again*, by Means of theſe vain Boaſters, *in the Yoke of* that vile *Bondage to Sin*, from which ye are now clean eſcaped. I teſtify unto you, that if you ſtill continue in Sin, CHRIST ſhall profit you nothing: That CHRIST is no Saviour to *you*, unleſs He ſaves you *from your Sins*; and that unleſs it purify your Heart, Faith ſhall profit you nothing. O when will ye underſtand, that to oppoſe either Inward or Outward Holineſs, under Colour of exalting CHRIST, is directly to act the Part of *Judas*, to *betray the Son of Man with a Kiſs?* Repent, repent! Leſt He cut you in ſunder with the two-edged Sword that cometh out of his Mouth! It is *you yourſelves* that, by oppoſing the very End of his Coming into the World, are crucifying the Son of God afreſh, and putting Him to an open Shame. It is *you* that, by expecting to *ſee the* LORD *without Holineſs*, thro' the Righteouſneſs of CHRIST, *make the Blood of the Covenant an unholy Thing*, keeping thoſe unholy that ſo truſt in it. O beware! for Evil is before you! If thoſe who name not the Name of CHRIST, and die in their Sins, ſhall be puniſhed ſeven fold, ſurely you who thus make CHRIST *a Miniſter of Sin*, ſhall be puniſhed ſeventy and ſeven fold. What! Make CHRIST deſtroy his own Kingdom! Make CHRIST a Factor for *Satan!* Set CHRIST againſt Holineſs! Talk of CHRIST as *ſaving his People* in *their Sins!* It is no better than to ſay, He ſaves them from

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the Guilt, and not from the Power of Sin. Will you make the Righteouſneſs of CHRIST *ſuch* a Cover for the Unrighteouſneſs of Man? So that this means, *the Unrighteous* of every Kind *ſhall inherit the Kingdom of* GOD! Stop! Conſider! What are you doing? You did run well: Who hath bewitched you? Who hath corrupted you from the Simplicity of CHRIST, from the Purity of the Goſpel? You *did* know, *He that believeth is born of* GOD: And *whoſoever is born of* GOD *ſinneth not*; but while *he keepeth himſelf, that wicked One toucheth him not.* O come back to the true, the pure, the old Goſpel! That which ye received in the Beginning. Come back to CHRIST, who died to make you an holy People, *zealous of good Works. Remember from whence you are fallen, and repent and do the firſt Works.* Your *Father worketh hitherto*: Do ye work: Elſe your Faith is vain. For *wilt thou know, O vain,* O empty Man, that *Faith without Works is dead?* Wilt thou know that *tho' I have all Faith, ſo as to remove Mountains, and have not Love, I am nothing?* Wilt thou know, that all the Blood and Righteouſneſs of CHRIST, unleſs that *Mind be in thee which was in* Him, and thou likewiſe *walk as* CHRIST *walked*, will only increaſe thy Damnation? *If any Man teach otherwiſe, and conſent not to wholſome Words, and to the Doctrine which is according to Godlineſs, He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about Strife of Words, whereof* come Railings, evil Surmiſings; perverſe Diſputings of Men of corrupt Minds, and deſtitute of the Truth. Be no longer afraid of the ſtrongeſt Exhortations either to Inward or Outward Holineſs. Hereby GOD the Father is glorified, and GOD the Son truly exalted. Do not ſtupidly and ſenſelelly call this *legal*, a ſilly, unmeaning Word. Be not afraid of being *under the Law of* GOD, but of being *under the Law of Sin.*

Love

Love the ſtricteſt Preaching beſt, that which moſt ſearches the Heart, and ſhews you wherein you are unlike CHRIST: And that which preſſes you moſt to love Him with all your Heart, and ſerve Him with all your Strength.

11. Suffer me to warn you of another ſilly unmeaning Word: Do not ſay, "I *can do nothing*." If ſo, then you know nothing of CHRIST: Then you have no Faith. For if you have, if you believe, then you *can do all Things thro'* CHRIST who ſtrengtheneth you. You can love Him and keep his Commandments: And to *you* his *Commandments are not grievous*. Grievous to them that believe! Far from it. They are the Joy of your Heart. Shew then your Love to CHRIST by keeping his Commandments, by walking in all his Ordinances blameleſs. Honour CHRIST by obeying him with all your Might, by ſerving Him with all your Strength. Glorify CHRIST by imitating CHRIST in all Things, by walking as He walked. Keep to CHRIST, by keeping in all his Ways. Truſt in CHRIST, to live and reign in your Heart. Have Confidence in CHRIST that He will fulfil in you all his great and precious Promiſes, that He will work in you all the good Pleaſure of his Goodneſs, and all the Work of Faith with Power. Cleave to CHRIST, 'till his Blood have cleanſed you from all Pride, all Anger, all evil Deſire. Let CHRIST do all! Let Him that has done all *for you*, do all *in you*. Exalt CHRIST as a Prince to give Repentance: A Saviour, both to give Remiſſion of Sins, and to create in you a new Heart, to renew a right Spirit within you. This is the Goſpel, the pure, genuine Goſpel; glad Tidings of great Salvation. Not the New, but the Old, the everlaſting Goſpel, the Goſpel not of *Simon Magus*, but of JESUS CHRIST.

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The GOD and Father of our LORD JESUS CHRIST give you *according to the Riches of his Glory, to be ſtrengthened with Might by his Spirit in the inner Man, that* CHRIST *may dwell in your Hearts by Faith: That, being routed and grounded in Love, ye may be able to comprehend with all Saints, what is the Length, and Breadth, and Depth, and Heighth: And to know that Love of* CHRIST, *which ſurpaſſeth Knowledge, that ye may be filled with all the Fulneſs of* GOD!

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